Dear friend Orestes, Perm 5/20/75

After receiving your letter of March 21 I answered on the 27th, explaining what was keeping me busy and that I could make out enough of your letter to tell me that I had better be careful and understand it clearly before answering it. Not to trust what I could make out with a dictionary.

Perhaps your papers carried the AP story Sunday on what I obtained from one of those suits. If the Sunday paper carried it (the date it was to have been published) I'd appreciate a copy.

I am due in court tomorrow on the second. The FBI is playing games with this evidence, the court and me and I have to get to work promptly to help my lawyer Jim expose them.

I have been sick. It was serious but really was not bad on me except that it left me weak. I had pneumonia and pleurisy. It happened when I was away from home, which was worse. And now that I am better the weakness is a real problem because things like grass and weeds are growing as well as flowers and I have to mow them down. I have two old riding mowers, both just repaired and neither working after repair! So, I have all this work to do with a worn-out push mower. It can be very hard and it is because I was not able to mow when the grass and weeds just started to grow. What I have to do is work perhaps 30 minutes and then stop and rest for an hour or more. So, with 5 acres, I'm pushed for time to push! And still do anything else.

Although I am supposed to get more sleep, I got up early to prepare some memos for my lawyer to use in court and to answer your letter because I now have a translation of it.

I do with you would use your tape recorder. You could tell me more and I could listen to it while I drive. For example, I'll have to drive for more than two hours tomorrow, to and from Washington. When I'm on the open road it is safe to listen. While I have a little trouble with your accent, I do make it out and I learn more from you this way, as in the past. Nobody ever writes all that is in his memory. When I take my wife to the grocery store, I can listen to tapes while she shops. Listening takes more time for me than reading but it gives me more information, which I want.

You told me things I did not know and about which I would like to know more. Maybe also I forgot some. I do not remember that I knew there were two different printing operations at 115 Decatur, Grad's and Melvin's. I thought it was all one as I now remember it. What was Grad in the Army and what do you think was done in his press that you cannot prove?

A man who was an informant told me of being inside that building. As I remember it he told me that at the back of the second floor there were things indicating work for the CIA, with big maps of Cuba on the walls or doors. He also told me that Grad was able to do printing other plants could not do. Can you tell me more of this?

You say "Mr. Melvin was also working for the CIA." What was Melvin's first name and what work did he do for the CIA? Can you tell me what kind of counterfeit money he printed? For what country?

Then you say that as soon as Garrison started up they closed the original Melvin plant. Is this the case you told me about, the truck in the alley all of a sudden? If you can tell me more it could be helpful. And the name of the second Melvin who then went to work for Grad? I take it that with this cover the same kind of work, more or less, continued under Grad? For the CIA?

I am aware that you now are not afraid, but I'd appreciate it if you would tell me what it is that you know.

You are right about Garrison. I suppose it is when you realized this that you stopped seeing me for a while. I did not understand him when I first went there but later I came to know the truth. But when I did and told you in a certain way, I think you had doubts. Remember when I told you that I was independent, that I did not work for him? This was always true but by then I had come to understand that he was not doing good work and that even the good people he had working for him were without experience in this particular kind of work.

This is not personal criticism of them because I would be lost in their kind of work, regular police work.

With some of them I had a decent relationship and some did keep their words. Thus I could have protected you as I did others because we had a working relationship, some of these others and I. I regret that Jim's word was not good, as I learned. I can date this for you. It was the time I was there before that night your tires were slashed. (That woman was un poco loco but she also had good information for me.)

If when you say "Mr. Garrison did not desire that you should be in New Orleans" you have special reasons I would like to know them. I know some. One he was jealous because I did things he and his people could or did not. Another is because I did not kiss his ass and tell him how great he was while he was making a mess of it. Another is that I stopped some of his messes and cleaned others up after he made them. Yet another is that he did not understand some things and stole some of my work when I explained it to him in confidence because he did not understand it and I did, expecting to use it myself. Still another is that he had friends from out of New Orleans who did not like me. I could go on. I know. But there also were dishonorable visits to you, including by that puto Lane. If you would take the time to explain these things it could be helpful to my understanding and to the work I am still doing. I will when I can return to the work I was doing then in New Orleans. I have that book partly written but have had to lay it aside. I really would like to be able to use all you know and have not told me in it when I can get back to it. You were very helpful in that work and I believe you knew more that you did not tell me. I do not know why but I think you had your own reasons. One perhaps was not trusting Garrison?

One thing I think I never asked you when we were talking about the pressures the FBI put on you: did you ever know or have anything to do with a former agent named Milton Kaack? Or one named Will Hayden Griffin or Griffen? The second one left New Orleans when he incurred Hoover's displeasure. I understand he covered the French Quarter.

I believe I knew that you got your passport in the Customs building. What I do not remember knowing is that they could be obtained elsewhere in New Orleans. I also know you thought strange things were being done in that building but not what strange things.

If I never told you, one of my problems with Garrison was his nutty idea that because you needed vacations from the hard work you did and travelled you had to be some kind of agent! He actually believed this and had people working on it. I finally got him to drop it. This is the kind of foolishness on which they wasted time and ruined themselves. But none dared stand up to him. This made me more unwelcome when I did. (Some of them asked me to do this when they were afraid to.)

What do you mean when you say "It seems that things have changed a little" and base this on a meeting you had with one I take to be Louis Ivon. I suppose Louis is back in the regular police now. He is the one in Jim's office for whom I had most respect. If this conversation was not confidential, I would like to know what it is so that I could understand this change. I liked Louis and he tried to help me. He is by far the most competent Garrison had only Garrison kept him too busy with crazy things. Louis is not a lawyer but alone, with help he could boss, he could and would have done a better job than was done. I don't see how he cut up with what he did.

You are right, truth does reign over all things, but the question is how to bring truth out. It now cannot be done in court in New Orleans. However, it can in other ways. For example, and please keep this confidential, there are Members of Congress in touch with me. I'd like to know these things you have in mind so that if and when there is the opportunity I can use them. There are other indications that this false story is coming apart. I am, I think, doing much to this end in court in Washington. (I've now won five suits on this alone against the government.) So, while there is no way of knowing, if you would tell me these things perhaps I could

use the information this way, in court up here. Without knowing it, naturally, I cannot. And I do think the only practical way is for you to talk it, on tape.

Was not John the lawyer who you had when the FBI was giving you trouble, when you were before the Warren Commission? (Remember I sent you their files on you, even showing the time they spent on you?) If you can not get this data back from him, can you tell me in detail what it was? If he gave it to them I may be able to get it or help you get it. This is not impossible.

It is not now possible for my friend Jim to leave and will not be for a while because of earlier and extensive commitments he has made as a lawyer. He has to do his work in court here because he has no choice. I have long wanted him to file some collection cases for me in New York but it simply has not been possible, much as I need the money out of which I've been cheated. So, the only way is for me to know and go over with him and then we try to do it in court here. So, let me known about those two bureau chiefs. I do not believe you ever mentioned them. If you did, not in detail or I've forgotten and I do not think I would. I knew only that one was behind the dirty things being done to you, the one there at the end of 1963 and into 1964.

Really the only practical way is for you to let me know these things because I can't go down there now. And not only because I do not have the money. You have been my friend, you have trusted me, so I think you know that we are still friends, that I value the help you give, and that you can still trust me.

I know that you are not afraid as I know when you were (and had reason to be) and as I know when you reached your decision (after that first a uto accident, when you got the Cadillac). Am I not right? You were also afraid when your wife was pregnant and there was that other accident, but what man would not be afraid for a pregnant wife and the unborn baby?

All the tapes of our previous interviews are safe and secure for when I can return to that writing. This is the one way what you know can be preserved. Please do it this way again, only without me there to ask questions. I can write you questions afterward if I have any.

Orestes, I have taken this time beginning before daylight when I should not be getting so little rest while I am recovering and in preference to the work I've postponed that I need for court tomorrow because I know you can be helpful and because you have been and because you may not only know what you say but can also give me information that may fit with work I have done that you do not know. One little fact that may mean nothing to you may fit with what I have done or with records I have obtained from the government.

I do hope you will take the time to do this.

If you see Louis again please remember me to him.

My best wishes to you. You have been a good friend and I prise it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg